



THIS WEEK IN IRAQ



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U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Jeff Lowry

The newly-elected Iraqi Council of Representatives assembles for the first time in Baghdad on Thursday, marking the first freely elected permanent government in the country.

Iraq, 3 years later

Story by Spc. Brian J. Anderson
Multi-National Corps - Iraq

Three years after Coalition Forces freed Iraq, the Iraqi government took a big step toward liberty by seating the country's Council of Representatives.

On Thursday, the 275-seat chamber swore an oath to the "people of Iraq" marking the first stage in forming a complete government only three years after three decades of suffering under the brutal dictatorship of Saddam Hussein.

Exactly three years ago Sunday, on March 19, 2003, Coalition Forces entered Iraq to end Saddam's reign of terror.

"America and the world are safer today without Saddam Hussein in power," said President George W. Bush, after Saddam's regime was toppled less than a month later.

"He is no longer oppressing the Iraqi people, sponsoring terror, and threatening the world."

Since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Iraq has made several rebuilding steps including the democratic election of an Iraqi government, development of an Iraqi constitution, restoration of Iraq's infrastructure beyond pre-war levels and the establishment of an increasingly effective Iraqi Security Force.

Thursday's seating of the Iraqi parliament was a big milestone for Iraq that's key to its future, retired Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers, the former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff told Fox News recently.

"This is going to be a series of singles

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GENERAL CASEY'S CORNER

The clock has started

As I have said repeatedly, the Coalition and its Iraqi partners make progress little steps at a time, and after a while these little steps add up to a big moment. Last Thursday was such a moment with the seating of the Council of Representatives.

The gathering of the CoR lasted little more than 30 minutes.

However, during that time 275 delegates of the new Iraqi parliament met, swore an oath to the country of Iraq and started the 30-day clock on

electing a Presidency Council. The event remained incident free, once again demonstrating the capability of the Iraqi Security Forces to support the government of Iraq.

The momentum is building.

The recent terrorist bombing in Samarra and the resulting sectarian violence was terrible, but the events of late February have had the opposite effect on the country than intended by the terrorists.

Instead of a nationwide uprising, there is unity. Far from the constant drumbeat of civil war heard in the media, the majority of the violence witnessed by the world is taking place in a small section of one town in

one province of Iraq - Baghdad. The vast majority of the 18 provinces are peaceful and progressing. The terrorists hoped for a paralyzed Iraqi government. Instead, the Iraqi government moved decisively during the Golden Dome crisis and the CoR was seated.

Iraqi is moving forward.

By Gen. George W. Casey
Multi-National Force - Iraq
Commanding General



Three years ago, Iraq was under a cruel dictator. Today, Iraq has a democratically elected government starting to form. Porous borders, once a highway for terrorists, have been blocked to the enemies of Iraq. Former safe havens and training grounds have been removed. After the 2003 invasion, Iraq had remnants of military and police forces with loyalties to a man, not the people.

Today, Iraq proudly boasts 240,000 Iraqi Security Force personnel. The ISF continues to grow and serve the people of Iraq - not militia heads or sectarian interests. Oil revenues are up to \$24.5 billion from a 2003 postwar level of \$5.1 billion. Electricity is more evenly spread across Iraq, instead of being focused on Baghdad. Rotting infrastructure is being repaired.

"Iraq had remnants of military and police forces with loyalties to a man, not the people."

For many, today marks the holiday of Arba'een; the end of the 40-day mourning period for the Imam Hussein Ali. Millions of pilgrims will travel to Karbala under the watchful eye of the ISF. Hopefully this sacred period will mark a unique opportunity for reconcilia-

tion and healing and perhaps an opening to move past the present conflict and toward unification.

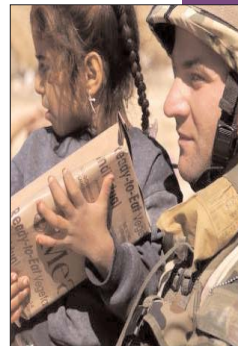
More sacrifice and little steps will have to be taken in the coming months - but I am confident we will prevail. Watch again as we take another big leap toward democracy this spring.

Photos around the Fertile Crescent

El Salvador Army Maj. Gen. Edwardo Mendoza of Multi-National Division Central - South, speaks with an Iraqi Army officer at an Iraqi base near Camp Delta in Al Kut on Tuesday.



U.S. Army Pfc. Roberto Maynez from the 66th Armor Regiment pulls security while Staff Sgt. Gabriel Monreal talks with a local Iraqi man during a patrol near Taji last week.



A Polish Soldier from Multi-National Division Central - South holds a child after giving her a meal, ready-to-eat during a site survey at a school in Diwaniyah.



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Randall Sizemore from the 817th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, reconfigures the floor of a C-17 Globemaster III aircraft.

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Iraq

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and doubles. There are not going to be many home runs in trying to build a democracy in Iraq. ... And Iraqis are struggling with this. They are struggling with putting the political process in place to replace the one of terror and fear that reined for three decades."

Although Iraq is headed in the right direction, there are still many obstacles to overcome.

"Even though Coalition forces have increased their support structures and standards of living, the 'bad guys' seem to have established a more commanding impact on the battlefield," said Maj. Robert S. Hookness Jr., chief, programs, Multi-National Corps - Iraq. "Troops don't just drive from Baghdad International Airport to Balad anymore. They have to move in heavily armored, heavily guarded convoys or, better yet, they fly. The 'bad guys' have also shifted focus away from a purely insurgent focus on 'enemy' troops and begun targeting other Iraqis."

Capt. Mike Forbes, operations officer for the MNC-I's Iraq Assistance Group, agreed with Hookness.

"The insurgency has matured, so the security situation hasn't improved since OIF 1," said Forbes, who was here during OIF 1 and is here again for OIF 3. "However, the Iraqi Security Forces have also significantly matured since the days of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps and Iraqi National Guard."

Forbes said his impression of the Iraqi Security Forces has changed.

"Last time, I had a pretty low opinion of



Shiite Muslim pilgrims make their way along the dusty roads of southern Iraq, on a religious journey to Karbala and Najaf for the observance of Arba'een.

the Iraqi Police, Border Police, and ICDC," Forbes said. "They were poorly trained, ill-equipped and plagued with corruption. The ISF today is completely different from what it was in OIF 1 and, while they still have a long way to go, they are light-years ahead of their predecessors."

According to the Department of Defense, about 100 Iraqi battalions are in the fight against terrorists, with 49 of these battalions controlling their own battlespace. Iraqi Security Forces control about 60 percent of Baghdad and about 75 percent of operations involve Iraqi Security Forces, nearly half of them independently planned, conducted and led by Iraqis.

The changes in Iraq's Security Forces are not the only changes; the infrastructure and government have also made great strides over the past three years.

"Iraqi facilities are run by Iraqis. It sounds funny but when I was here during OIF 1, most companies were closed," said Sgt. Steven Neal, Battery C, 2nd Battalion, 5th Field Artillery. "We put a lot of individuals to work, and now, Iraqis have taken ownership of their companies and most, as far as I can tell, are independently run."

"Iraq is definitely more established," said Sgt. Christopher Prescott, Btry. C., 2nd Bn., 5th FA.

Although it has only been three years, Iraq has made sev-

eral large steps and Lt. Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, commanding general of MNC-I, said his troops are working hard to ensure Iraq has a brighter future.

"We are providing police training teams and unit partnerships and mentoring to help develop the capability of the police force, much as we have with the Army, and we are working with the Iraqi government to assist in building ministerial capacities so that the government can provide the necessary essential services for all Iraqis," said Chiarelli.

"We are (also) developing provincial reconstruction teams to work with provincial governments in developing economic systems and building infrastructure so that the Iraqis can have clean water, electricity, fuel, proper sewage systems and trash removal.

"All of these non-kinetic aspects are being worked simultaneously to move Iraq forward as a country," Chiarelli said.

There is still a long road ahead, but signs of progress are easy to see.

"Our mission and presence in Iraq is crucial to stability in the country and the region," said Hookness. "I am more convinced that the Iraqis are willing to take the risks to stand on their own two feet and are doing a great job for an infant administration. I truly can't believe how far they have come in the last (three) years."

— Material from the American Forces Information Service was used in this report.



U.S. Navy photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Larson

An Iraqi Soldier from the 9th Mechanized Division and a U.S. Army Soldier maintain perimeter security in Halasba during a mission to bring water and medical supplies to the community.

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Marines clear path for Iraq

Story and photos by
Sgt. Jerad W. Alexander
Marine Regimental Combat Team 7

CAMP AL QA'IM — Marines of the 6th Civil Affairs Group, working in concert with local Iraqis, have begun cleaning up rubble in the city of Husaybah.

The rubble was a result of fighting during Operation Steel Curtain, a Coalition offensive against the insurgents in the al Qa'im region of the western al Anbar province. During the operation, insurgents would use homes and compounds for cover, which resulted in damaged buildings when Coalition Forces used air power and ordnance.

Some of the buildings damaged during the fighting were used by the local government. Without these buildings, the local government has slowed down, said Maj. Sean M. Hurley, a civil affairs team leader for 6th Civil Affairs



Workers clear rubble from a home that was one of several buildings damaged during fighting between Coalition Forces and insurgents in Husaybah last fall.

Group.

Master Sgt. David D. Minter, a civil affairs specialist with the 6th CAG and native of Haw River, N.C., said it is the job of the unit to work with the local government officials,

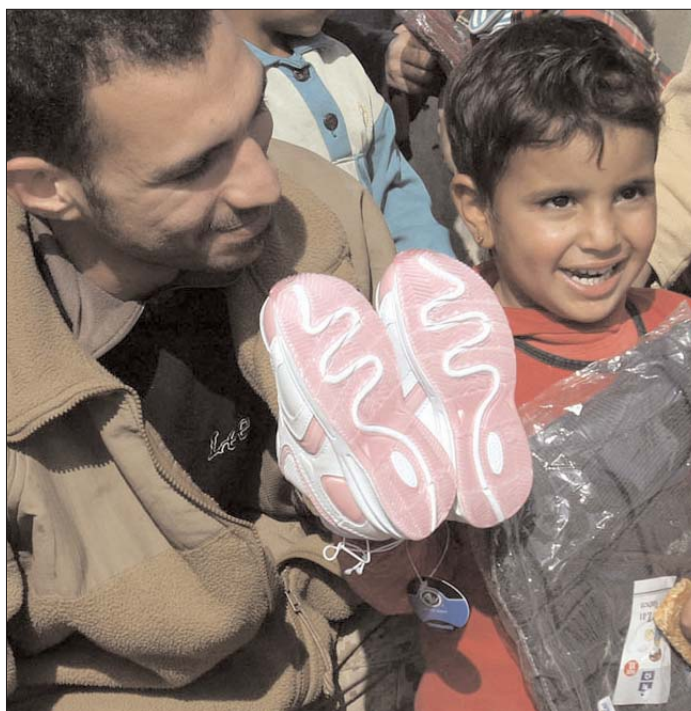
mayors, police chiefs, city officials and local importance, to assist them with getting the local government on its feet.

"Without government you can't have leadership - people coming together for the common good," said Minter.

Roughly \$190,000 has been spent in rubble clearing in the Husaybah area alone since combat operations ended, said Hurley. Husaybah is a city of about 55,000 people.

Rubble is being cleared from the town's hospital and schools as well as several sites of planned municipal buildings and a new Iraqi Police station. The eventual construction of new municipal buildings and the Iraqi Police station are integral parts of getting a fledgling local government on its feet.

In the process of clearing rubble, Civil Affairs works with the al Qa'im Reconstruction Committee, a group comprised of local leaders to determine which areas require immediate attention.



A smiling Iraqi girl holds up a pair of tennis shoes given to her by Marines of the 6th Civil Affairs Group in Husaybah.



Hero of the Week

Pilot leads Infantry to large IED cache

Story and photos by Sgt. Ryan Matson
101st Combat Aviation Brigade, 101st Airborne Division

They say an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

In the case of Chief Warrant Officer Brian Stoner, a Kiowa pilot with the 101st Airborne Division, a weapons cache found can translate into American Soldiers' lives saved.

No one will ever know how many lives were saved as a result of a cache Stoner helped find.

Stoner was flying lead during a night mission in the Hawijah area. That's when he spotted something suspicious. "As we came up on an open field, we identified six personnel in the field and as soon as we



Kiowa pilot Chief Warrant Officer Brian Stoner (left), led Coalition Forces to a weapons cache (below).



came upon them they dispersed," Stoner said. He watched as two of the individuals fled to a small building. Infantry forces later detained them.

Stoner also directed the ground troops to where he first spotted the six individuals,

where they found what was at the time the largest cache of Improvised Explosive Device-making materials in that area of Iraq, consisting of more than 400 two-way radios, circuitry, detonating devices and other materials.

Iraqi Soldiers are at home during patrol

Story and photo by Sgt. Zach Mott
3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division

BALAD - U.S. Soldiers from a 4th Infantry Division counterinsurgency platoon may have guided Iraqi Soldiers during a recent patrol south of Logistical Support Area Anaconda, but it was the Iraqis who were at home.

The U.S. Soldiers critiqued the Iraqi Soldiers when they all rallied at Forward Operating Base O'Ryan after the patrol.

"We go out there and see if they're doing the right stuff," said Sgt. Cesar Vazquez, a truck commander from the 4th Infantry Division.

The U.S. Soldiers teach tactics and techniques, but the Iraqi Soldiers know the people.

As the patrol navigated through the dirt and sand roads, the IA Soldiers stopped and talked to residents to see if there had been any insurgents in the area.

As the stream of vehicles moved further away from the nation's capital the land became more desert-like. The green around the compound was a memory replaced with layer upon layer of brown talc. The few green spots along this route seemed as out of place as blue at an Army Ball.

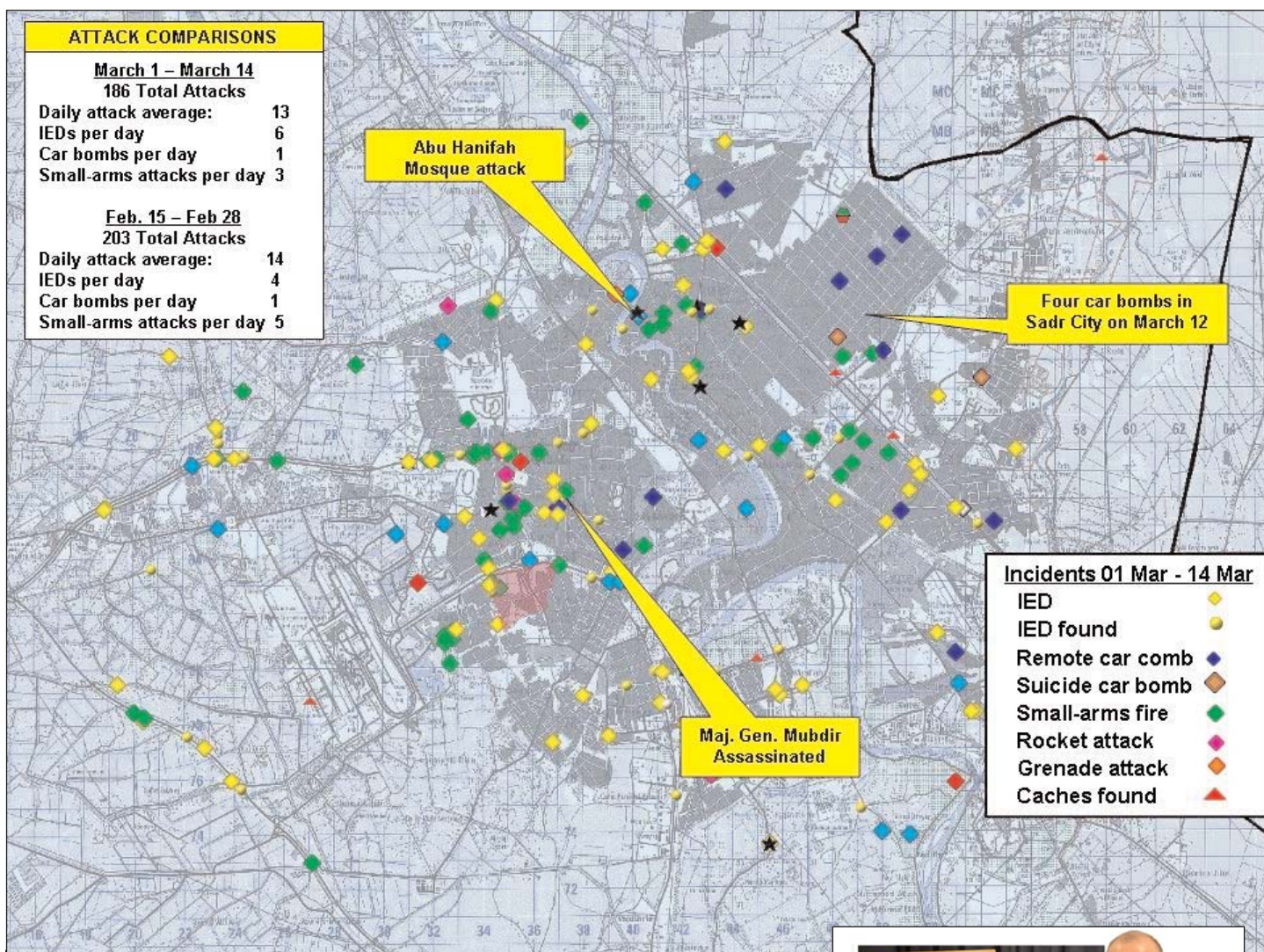
But, for the IA Soldiers, this area is home. Because of the bond of nationality and an ingrained knowledge of the area, IA Soldiers are at an advantage over the Coalition Forces.

"I have a good, familiar background with the people so he can ask about what is going on find who is good and who is bad," said Sgt. Abdullah, an IA patrol commander from the Iraqi Army's 1st Brigade, 4th Division.

Vazquez said he yearned for his own home and the Iraqis he trains are his ticket there. "(We want to) make sure they know how to do it and to let us know that they will be capable of replacing us," he said.

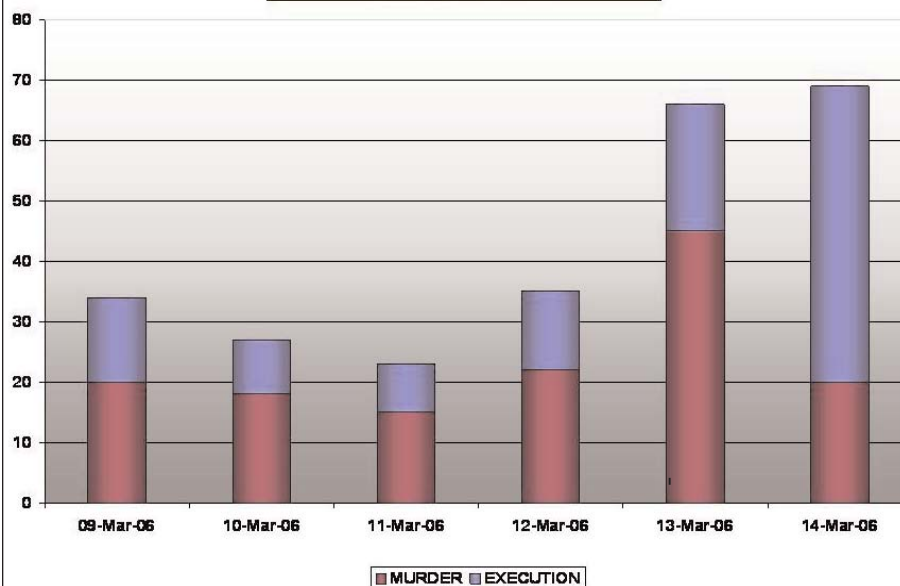


Sgt. 1st Class Jason Maynard, counterinsurgency platoon sergeant, listens as Iraqi Soldiers, led by Sgt. Abdullah, left of Maynard, discuss where the patrol is and where it is heading.



Murders and Executions:

9 - 14 March 06



MNF-I Weekly Press Conference



Troubling times

"We're in a very vulnerable period, the people of Iraq, the Iraqi Security Forces and Coalition Forces. As they try to form this national unity government, you got a(n) insurgency that's intent on stopping that from happening. [They are] frustrated because the Council of Representatives was seated. [The insurgents are] going to continue to try to inflame sectarian violence, and he's going to use things like VBIEDs and IEDs to kill innocent civilians."

Toolkit of terror

"He also has another insidious tool in his tool kit, and that's murders and assassinations. As I've told you before, in Baghdad, what we have seen on average is about 10 murders or executions per day. In recent times, we've seen it spike to as much as an average of over 30 civilian murders or assassinations per day, and you can see, on the 13th and the 14th, a significant spike."

"Insurgents want to inflame. They want to inflame sectarian violence to the point where Shi'as feel attacked by Sunnis, they retaliate, Sunnis then retaliate against the Shi'a population. And we're seeing that demonstrated in murders and executions, as well as in VBIEDs."



Moldovan Lt. Col. Vitalie Stoian prepares an explosive charge using C4 under the guidance of Air Force explosive ordnance detachment personnel at a range on Contingency Operating Base Speicher.

Moldovan Soldiers in the fight against terrorists

Story and photos by 2nd Lt. Blake Saksa
555th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

COB SPEICHER - Moldova may be small, but the country is making a significant contribution to the building of a free and independent Iraq.

Recently the U.S. 14th Engineer Battalion on Contingency Operating Base Speicher welcomed a Moldovan explosive ordnance disposal team to their ranks.

The eight EOD soldiers from Moldova are training with the U.S. engineers, but will soon deploy to another forward oper-

ating base to destroy unexploded ordnance left from the Saddam dictatorship.

"I'm glad for the opportunity to train with them," said Staff Sgt. Jesus Pedraza of the 14th Engineers. "Our cultural differences reminded the Soldiers that our responsibility is not to destroy, but rather to help people from diverse backgrounds rebuild a country."

The commander of the Moldovan detachment, Lt. Col. Vitalie Stoian, who is on his second tour in Iraq, has seen improvements since his first deployment.

"The training we have conducted here has been excellent," Stoian said. "Our team is full of experienced Sappers, but this is the first time we have worked with IED robots. This equipment makes our job safer and will make Iraq safer for its citizens."

2nd Lt. Joe Sawruck, the headquarters company support platoon leader, said that training with the Moldovan soldiers has been beneficial for both units.

"Having the opportunity to train with our Coalition allies is a unique opportunity and I think both sides learned from each other," Sawruk said. "We taught the Moldovans about our weapon systems and demo tech-



Moldova Facts:

Population: 4.4 million
Area: 21,029 miles (slightly larger than Maryland)
Literacy rate: 99.1 %
Government: Republic (Gained independence from USSR on Aug. 27, 1991)
Economy: \$9.4 billion gross domestic product, 40 % agriculture



A Moldovan captain helps Moldovan Lt. Col. Vitalie Stoian tape a dynamite charge together.

niques, but for us it was a cultural and learning experience that we gained a lot from."

Stoian said that working with the best equipment, disciplined Soldiers and taking proper protective measures relieves some of the burden a commander feels when placing troops in harm's way.

"I have a tremendous responsibility to my country, my soldiers and their families," said Stoian. "I am pleased that the United States puts so much emphasis on protecting their Soldiers and takes every precaution against harming Iraqis."

Locked up and loaded with insurgents

Story by Sgt. Kristopher Joseph
Multi-National Corps - Iraq

Foot Patrol

Five suspected insurgents were detained and a cache was discovered in a soccer field on Friday.

Soldiers with the 4th Infantry Division cordoned off a large area and detained four suspected insurgents. At the second location, a nearby soccer field, a cache was discovered and the fifth suspected insurgent was detained.

Stashed in the field was a rifle, an anti-aircraft gun, rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 100 pounds of C4 explosive and other improvised explosive device making materials.

Room to boom

Tuesday, members of Iraq's 3rd Public Order Brigade discovered a roadside bomb in front of a trade school southeast of Baghdad.

The bomb consisted of an artillery round, two batteries and a block of explosives.

Days of thunder

In the past two days, Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division detained several insurgents and confiscated a large cache of improvised explosive devices.

After receiving a tip, Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry Regiment, conducted a cordon and search with members of the Iraqi Police. Once inside the target residence, the combined force discovered more than 300 false identification cards, including Iraqi Police IDs. During the search, an Iraqi man came to the house to see the owner. After a few minutes of questioning, the man admitted to previously purchasing a false ID card from the owner of the residence. The owner of the house and the second man were both taken into custody.

In a similar incident, 101st Soldiers on a combined patrol with Iraqi Police discovered a weapons cache at a home in Kirkuk. An Iraqi Emergency Services Unit had detained the owner of the residence the day prior after receiving information linking the man



U.S. Navy photo by Photo by Petty Officer 1st Class Bart A. Bauer
Spc. Jeremy Titus, from the 10th Mountain Division, provides security for fellow Soldiers on patrol Thursday in east Baghdad.

to a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attack in the Raheem Awa neighborhood of the city. A search of the man's house yielded several bags of ammunition as well as a large cache of materials used to make IEDs including four rocket propelled grenade rounds,

three blocks of C-4 explosive, 13 Motorola radios with batteries and four rolls of electrical wire.

IED demolition

The 101st Airborne Division has

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Operations

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been working with and training Iraqi Security Forces in Kirkuk since taking over operations in northern Iraq last November. The combined efforts of 101st Airborne Soldiers and their Iraqi counterparts continue to improve stability to the region as missions such as these diminish the ability of insurgents to harm innocent civilians.

Task Force Band of Brothers' Soldiers unearthed a large cache of weapons and explosives at a house south of Tikrit on Tuesday.

On March 10, Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division discovered several mortar rounds that were being disassembled for use in constructing IEDs. The home owner was detained.

The Soldiers returned to the house March 14 and conducted a more detailed search of the area. They discovered 80 anti-aircraft rounds, 11 large artillery shells, hand-grenades, IED components, a sniper rifle and several thousand rounds of small-arms ammunition.

An explosive ordnance disposal team inspected the cache and found that it was too unstable to move. The area was cleared of civilians before the weapons and the house were destroyed in a controlled detonation.

Cache hunting

Iraqi Police raided two houses near Tikrit on Tuesday and discovered two caches of weapons and explosives.

The raids were generated by tips given to the police, who quickly secured both sites and called in an explosive ordnance disposal team from Task Force Band of Brothers.

The police ensured the area was clear of any civilians and the EOD team performed a controlled detonation to eliminate the weapons. Both houses were destroyed by the detonations.

Capital city caches

Multi-National Division - Baghdad Soldiers found a weapons cache in south Baghdad and detained nine suspected terrorists on March 13.

Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division discovered a weapons cache while on patrol south of Baghdad.

Random numbers

During a random vehicle search in New Baghdad, 4th Infantry Division Soldiers detained nine suspected terrorists after finding an assassination list containing the names of Iraqi Ministry officials.

Two off-duty Iraqi Soldiers captured two terrorists who were emplacing an improvised explosive device in Kirkuk Province on March 12.

The two soldiers noticed two men working next to a car stopped alongside the road. As the two Soldiers approached, they realized that the two men were emplacing an IED. The



U.S. Navy photo by Petty officer 3rd Class Shawn Hussong
A Chinook helicopter carries 101st Airborne Division and Iraqi Army Soldiers during Operation Swarmer on Thursday. Operation Swarmer was a combined air assault operation to clear the area northeast of Samarra of suspected insurgents.

soldiers apprehended the two men and then called local police who took the two terrorists into custody, while an Iraqi explosives disposal unit disposed of the IED.

"The actions of these two Soldiers is indicative of the success the Iraqi Security Forces are having as a whole," said Maj. Greg Bishop of the 101st Airborne Division, stationed in Kirkuk. "They are embracing the values of being a full-time professional soldier, always prepared to defend their country."

In the past three days, Iraqi Police captured several individuals involved in terrorism in one form or another. Police in the Daquq district captured a member of the Omar Bin Khatab terrorist cell, who was known to transport weapons and IEDs throughout the region, while police in the Qoria district detained a woman suspected of using her home as a safe haven for terrorists. In yet another community, children told police of weapons stashed in a nearby dumpster. Upon investigation, police found 18 fuses and a more than 20 explosive rounds.

"What we are seeing is success breeding success," Bishop added. "As the Iraqi Army and local police continue to capture terrorists and find caches, local citizens are stepping forward with information."

One detainee was identified as an Iraqi Police officer and the other was identified as a member of the Mahdi militia.

"What we are seeing is success breeding success"

Iraqi, American firefighters douse blaze

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Will Ackerman
447th Air Expeditionary Group

SATHER AIR BASE - Thanks to a cooperative effort between Iraqi and American firefighters, a five-alarm fire at a weapons training facility on the Victory Base Complex was extinguished without any injuries or damage to other buildings.

Iraqi firefighters based at the training site responded to the March 11 fire after seeing thick, black smoke billowing into the sky. They called for assistance from American and Iraqi firefighters throughout the complex, which is adjacent to Baghdad International Airport.

The indoor shooting range was lined with 50-pound rubber blocks, which caused the fire to quickly spread.

"We pushed water with our two trucks and then called for back-up," said Assad, the site's Iraqi fire chief. "The fire started suddenly getting big. We knew we couldn't handle alone with our two trucks."

Camp Stryker's fire department called for assistance from

firefighters at Sather Air Base, Camp Victory, Camp Liberty and Baghdad International Airport.

The 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron Fire Station crews were the first subsequent responders. Because the fire had burned for about 30 minutes, and rubber blocks lined the facility's interior, billowing flames and thick, black smoke reached high into the afternoon sky.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Adam Thurston takes a breath after fighting the blaze.

"We were worried there might be people in the facility," said Tech. Sgt. Dennis Schipper, the Sather AB firefighter who took control as the incident commander. "We didn't (know) if there were occupants inside."

Iraqi firefighters aggressively attacked the fire before the Sather team arrived. But with no hydrant systems, they and the other responding firefighters went on the "defensive" to try and save the adjoining dining facility



Iraqi firefighters battle a five-alarm blaze at a training facility. U.S. and Iraqi fire crews saved half of the facility, as well as adjacent buildings.

and remaining indoor weapons training range.

"Our goal then was containment," Schipper said.

They worked in concert with other responding firefighters to set up an "emergency" water tank. The system is a temporary water bladder that feeds the firefighters' hoses. Workers dumped water from trucks into the bladder from emergency water sources throughout the complex.

The fire, which destroyed the east

wing of the structure, burned until the early morning March 12.. Smoke from the smoldering rubber was seen drifting into the sky two days later.

The Iraqi and American firefighters said the challenges included no hydrants, poor communication and a language barrier.

But they both agreed the joint training they perform each week paid huge dividends when they came together to fight the fire, which was the largest most had ever fought. It was also the first real fire for some.

"Our (joint training) is very good," Assad said. "It makes it easy to work together."



Firefighters from the 447th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron Fire Department prepare to battle a five-alarm blaze at a Victory Base Complex training facility on March 11.

Tall Afar

A well is complete in Tall Afar, supplying potable water to more than 1,000 residents.

Mosul

Construction is complete on seven schools in Mosul. Six new classrooms were built in already existing schools.



Zakho

Soldiers of the 142nd Corps Support Battalion handed out Beanie Babies to about 1,000 school children in Zakho.



al Sulaymaniyah

Two border forts in the al Sulaymaniyah Province will increase the security along the border with Iran, allow for the proper training of the border police and provide the Department of Border Enforcement additional logistical support for their border patrols.

Halabj Taza

Residents in Halabj Taza will benefit from the construction of a new police station that will increase security in the town.

Rebuilding Iraq

Projects that are shaping a nation



Basra

Construction is complete on two water projects in the Basrah Province. Seven miles of water pipeline were added to the Al Dayer water network.

Swarming Upon Terror

Iraqi Army-led Operation Swarmer involved more than 1,500 troops

Photos can be found on www.mnf-iraq.com

4th Iraqi Division Soldiers exit a CH-47 Chinook helicopter during Operation Swarmer on Thursday.



U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 3rd Class Shawn Hussong

Soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division stage a row of helicopters in preparation for Operation Swarmer.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Antony Joseph



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Lyle Grose

The crew chief of a UH-60 Blackhawk briefs Soldiers from 4th Iraqi Division and the 101st Airborne Division, prior to lifting off during Operation Swarmer in Samarra. It was the largest air assault mission since the beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Antony Joseph

Helicopters from the 101st Airborne Division take off from Forward Operating Base Remagen carrying Iraqi and U.S. Soldiers to kick off Operation Swarmer. By Saturday, six weapons caches with hundreds of munitions were discovered and more than 50 suspects detained. About 850 Iraqi troops led the operation.